

Democracy is depending on the FCC maintaining control of the airwaves for the benefit of the entire voting citizenry. The most current threat to this democratic ideal is Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air a partisan anti-Kerry documentary days before this year's presidential election. This is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and the opportunity it creates for a single programmer to dictate what is being seen by millions of citizens.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.